

# EPA ORDER

**Classification No:** 1400.1 A2

**Approval Date:** 04/01/2008

## **EPA POLICY FOR PREVENTING VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

**1. PURPOSE:** To establish policy, procedures, guidelines and responsibilities for the EPA Preventing Violence in the Workplace Program (PVIWP). This order communicates EPA's commitment to protect its employees and non-EPA personnel against violence while in EPA-controlled space or wherever official duties are performed.

**2. AUTHORITIES:** 41 C.F.R. § 102-74.440 (Possession of weapons on Federal Property); 18 USC § 930 (Possession of firearms and dangerous weapons in Federal facilities.)

**3. REFERENCES:**

EPA Order 3120.1, Conduct & Discipline (<http://intranet.epa.gov/rmpolicy/>)

EPA Policy for Preventing Violence in the Workplace  
(<http://intranet.epa.gov/rmpolicy/>)

OPM Guidance: "Dealing with Workplace Violence, a Guide for Agency Planners"  
([http://www.opm.gov/Employment\\_and\\_Benefits/WorkLife/OfficialDocuments/handbooks\\_guides/WorkplaceViolence/](http://www.opm.gov/Employment_and_Benefits/WorkLife/OfficialDocuments/handbooks_guides/WorkplaceViolence/))

**4. SUPERSEDES:** EPA Order 1400.1A1 dated 02/21/2003

**5. BACKGROUND:** In 2003, EPA created its initial Violence in the Workplace directive to establish national and local programs aimed at preventing violence through education, intervention, and incident response and reporting. This document reaffirms the Agency's policy.

**6. POLICY:** EPA is committed to working with its employees, supervisors and managers to promote and maintain a safe and secure work environment. Violence will not be tolerated. Violence includes but is not limited to: violent acts or oral/written threats of violence (verbal or physical attacks) having the intent or effect of harming, intimidating, harassing, or frightening individual(s), or involving threats to harm oneself,

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threats to damage or actual damage to EPA property, and other disruptive behavior. EPA prohibits any actual, implied or veiled threats, made seriously or in jest. Any form or manner of threatening or provoking remarks or threatening gestures in the work place are strictly prohibited. All reports of violent incidents in the workplace will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately on a case-by-case basis.

This policy requires the creation of a national program and local programs, with provisions for the establishment of standing Local Crisis Management and Advisory Teams (LCMAT), and is intended to prevent violence in the workplace through an Agency-wide strategy for education, intervention, and incident response and reporting.

**7. APPLICABILITY:** This order applies to all EPA employees and non-EPA personnel while in official duty status and/or while in EPA-controlled space. Non-EPA personnel includes but is not limited to, contractors, grantees, students, and visitors.

Specifically:

- Any EPA employee who engages in prohibited conduct as described above in “Section 6. Policy” of this order may face disciplinary action and/or possible criminal prosecution. The policies governing employee disciplinary actions are set forth in EPA Order 3120.1 Conduct and Discipline and applicable bargaining agreements.
- Non-EPA personnel who engage in prohibited conduct as described above in “Section 6. Policy” of this order may be permanently barred from EPA-controlled space and face applicable legal actions.

## **8. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**Administrator:** Overall responsible for EPA’s Violence in the Workplace Program. The Administrator delegates the responsibilities for administering and carrying out this program to the Assistant Administrators and Regional Administrators.

**Assistant Administrators/Regional Administrators:** Responsible and accountable for maintaining safety at the local level and responding appropriately to reported incidents of violence in the workplace. These senior officials are responsible for establishing and implementing local programs for preventing violence in the workplace. They are also responsible for educating and training employees and non-EPA personnel on preventing violence in the workplace. Although the methods for implementing core elements of the program may vary depending on local needs, each local program must contain the following core elements:

- A comprehensive risk assessment on workplace vulnerabilities to potential violence, including physical (building) security;
- A plan for training employees about the policy for preventing violence in the workplace, emphasizing the importance of ongoing education to provide a clear

understanding of each employee's role in preventing and reporting violence in the workplace;

- A plan to maintain safe and secured workplaces;
- A plan for communicating information to employees, either before, during and/or immediately after an incident of violence in the workplace;
- A plan for responding to potential or actual violence in the work place incidents;
- A system to maintain and manage records and report data on workplace violence incidents to the National PVIWP Coordinator; and
- A set of guidelines for:

1) The operation of the LCMAT, which is charged with assisting in situations with potential for violence, providing counseling and recommending the appropriate course(s) of action;

2) Following up on reports of violent incidents, taking action appropriate to the situation, including counseling, disseminating information to employees, and ensuring that debriefings are held for all those directly involved in or impacted by an incident; and

3) Providing information regarding the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which will help identify and make available the names of local mental health professionals – trained in debriefing, critical incident stress management (CISM), and post-traumatic stress – for responding to incidents, if such professionals are not available on site.

**Assistant Administrator, OARM\*:** The Assistant Administrator for Administration and Resources Management is responsible for establishing and administering a National Program for Preventing Violence in the Workplace. At a minimum, the National Program must:

- Establish a national network with a National Program Coordinator as a central point of contact;
- Assist in the development of local programs and provide counseling as appropriate;
- Monitor achievements of local program efforts.

*\*In carrying out these national responsibilities, OARM will seek assistance from other Headquarters organizations, Regions, Programs, and Laboratories as necessary.*

**Directors, Office of Human Resources, Office of Administration:** Assist the Assistant Administrator, OARM, in establishing and administering a National Program for Preventing Violence in the Workplace.

**Employees & Non-EPA Personnel:** To help foster a safe and secure work environment, all EPA employees and non-EPA personnel are responsible for conducting themselves in

a non-threatening, non-violent manner with others at all times. Furthermore, all employees and non-EPA personnel are required to report any suspicious or threatening situations or persons to the appropriate authorities and/or designated staff in accordance with local PVIWP policies.

**9. POINT OF CONTACT:** For questions about this Policy, please contact Pamela W. Parker; Office of Administration and Resources Management/Office of Human Resources/Employee Development and Services Division; 202-564-7916; [parker.pam@epa.gov](mailto:parker.pam@epa.gov).